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It's only a test, but Nov. 9 marks the first time that the Emergency Alert System has been tested nationwide, at the same time.

On Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 1 p.m. Central Standard Time, a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) will be conducted. It will be broadcast over all TV stations, radio stations, and video providers, including cable and satellite operators – at the same time. Local EAS tests last approximately 30 seconds. The Nov. 9 test is expected to last approximately three minutes. It will interrupt programming on all channels from all service providers.

The nationwide test does not include the City's outdoor warning siren system or the City's Connect-CTY emergency phone notification. The Nov. 9 EAS test will not include mobile communication devices.

This is a joint effort of the Department of Homeland Security through its Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS). These are the federal agencies that have EAS management responsibilities. The purpose is to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the system in alerting the public.

Although the EAS has been in existence for more than 15 years, there has never been a nationwide test of the system. The upcoming national test is critical to ensuring that the EAS works as designed. A reliable and effective emergency alert and warning system is key to ensuring the public's safety during times of emergency. The test is being conducted on Nov. 9 because Nov. 9 is near the end of hurricane season and before the severe winter weather season begins.